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Broiled to a Turn

An interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Tuesday, May 28, 1940, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the Blue network of the National Broadcasting Company.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

Now here's Ruth Van Deman, bringing as usual news and suggestions from the Bureau of Home Economics to the homemakers of the Farm and Home Hour. Ruth Van Deman

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Thank you, Wallace Kadderly. And may I say just a word about the "as usual" news and suggestions?"

KADDERLY:

Certainly, Ruth. Anything you like.

VAN DEMAN:

As we go along here talking about food and clothes, and household equipment, in our usual way, I just hope nobody thinks we are forgetting the women, and children and old people, in other countries who are refugees from their homes without food, without shelter, no clothes but what are on their backs.

KADDERLY:

No, Ruth, I'm sure we all have these people very much on our minds. And we're trying to help as best we can through the Red Cross, for one thing.

VAN DEMAN:

By the way, one of our staff, Miss Helen Holbrook, has been lent to Red Cross national headquarters here in Washington, to help plan emergency cooking kits for these refugee families in Europe.

KADDERLY:

That's putting home economics to public service all right world service.

VAN DEMAN:

And we're not forgetting that there are plenty of people needing help here at home. Dr. Hazel Stiebeling is out at the National Conference of Social Work, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, this week. She's giving the results of her studies on diets low-cost diet particularly so that social workers can help families put the emphasis on foods that safeguard health.

KADDERLY:

Yes, Dr. Stiebeling's food budgets are certainly leaving an impress--an impress for good all over this country.

VAN DEMAN:

Wallace, jumping now to something quite different, I have a few notes here about broiling.

KADDERLY:

Broiling steaks --- chicken?

VAN DEMAN:

Particular chicken, or any kind of a plump young bird of broiling size and age. Have you never eaten broiled young turkey or broiled duckling?

KADDERLY:

Don't believe I have. But they sound --- temptingly tender and toothsome, if that's not over-gliding the lily.

VAN DEMAN:

No, that's not overstating it a bit, if the cook's done her job of broiling right and had a good bird to work on.

KADDERLY:

Broiling is what you call cooking by radiant heat, isn't it?

VAN DEMAN:

Sir, I percieve you know the physics of broiding.

KADDERLY:

Maybe that's because I know how it feels when the heat radiates up from a good bed of coals to a piece of meat you're turning and broiling on a spit by the camp fire.

VAN DEMAN:

The principle's exactly the same when you slip a well-battered bird into a gas or electric broiler.

KADDERLY:

I've found you don't want to get the meat too close to the fire. It'll burn on the outside before the inside hardly gets warm.

VAN DEMAN:

That's true. Chicken or any kind of meat is best broiled at moderate heat. If you can't step the heat down enough, then move the chicken, or whatever it is you're broiling, farther away from the heat.

KADDERLY:

But in a range with a temperature control, you can regulate the heat at the source.

VAN DEMAN:

Not always, with complete success. Many times it's better to move the broiler pan away from the heat if the chicken seems to be cooking too fast on the outside.

And sometimes it's more convenient to start the broiling next to the flame or the heat unit. And when the bird's browned on both sides, transfer it, pan and all, to the oven to finish, where the temperature's more moderate.

KADDERLY:

Strictly speaking that isn't broiling at least not by radiant heat.

VAN DEMAN:

No, but it makes mighty good chicken to eat ... and cooked thoroughly and evenly that way, and basted now and then with the pan drippings and some melted fat to keep the bird juicy, you can get every bit of meat from the bones.

KADDERLY:

That's the only objection I have to broiled chicken

VAN DEMAN:

You find it hard to manage on the plate?

KADDERLY:

Don't you?

VAN DEMAN:

I used to. But I took a lesson from a friend - a newspaper reporter who covered a lot of women's conventions. She said she would have starved if she hadn't learned how to eat broiled chicken. It was on the menu so often. And I never saw anything like the speed and thoroughness with which she got every scrap of meat off the bones.

KADDERLY:

What's the trick?

VAN DEMAN:

Knowing the anatomy chiefly

KADDERLY:

Where to find the joints, eh

VAN DEMAN:

The cook can help a lot, if she breaks the main joints before she puts the chicken in to broil. Generally she takes off the wing tips too. They just get in the way and dry out on a broiled chicken.

KADDERLY:

I once had a boned broiler

VAN DEMAN:

All fixed up like a squab?

KADDERLY:

Yes. It was wonderful. You could cut straight down through it from stem to stern didn't hit a bone.

VAN DEMAN:

Boning broilers is an art. It can be done if you have the right kind of a small sharp knife.

KADDERLY:

And know how to get the bones out without hashing up the rest. That must take skill.

VAN DEMAN:

Skill and patience. Don't ask me to give a demonstration though. Boning a broiler is something I've never yet done.

It's easy enough to fix a chicken though for broiling with the bones in

KADDERLY:

Just split it down the back, don't you, and open it out spread eagle fashion?

VAN DEMAN:

That's right. And cut it in half through the breast bone, unless it's such a small bird you're serving a whole one to a person.

And one or two points about the broiling. A very young chicken is never very fat. So it always needs to be coated well with melted fat just before it's put into the broiling oven.

KADDERLY:

Salt? Does it go on then too?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, salt and pepper if you wish. And the chicken can be dusted very, very lightly with flour.

It's always best to turn the bird skin side down at first.

KADDERLY:

That is, split side up.

VAN DEMAN:

Um hum. Then when it browns, turn it and baste it with the melted fat.

KADDERLY:

Turn it more than once?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, several times, and always spoon up the pan drippings over the meat, that helps to keep in the juice.

KADDERLY:

How long does it take to broil chicken?

VAN DEMAN:

About 30 to 45 minutes for a 2-pound chicken. That is, using moderate heat.

KADDERLY:

Are all these directions on broiling young birds in your poultry cooking folder?

VAN DEMAN:

Wallace, you get a double star for that. I wasn't sure you'd even remember we had a poultry cooking folder. I brought along one in my bag here, all ready to draw forth at the psychological moment.

KADDERLY:

Too bad if I jumped the gun

VAN DEMAN:

Not at all. The psychological moment has arrived.

KADDERLY:

Then it is all right if I offer this blue-and-white folder on "Poultry Cooking" again to our listeners?

VAN DEMAN:

Absolutely. And I'll add good luck and good broilers.

KADDERLY:

Then, Farm and Home friends, if any of you want a copy of this 8-page folder on poultry cooking, just drop a card to the Bureau of Home Economics, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. All you need to write on the card, besides your own name and address, are the two words poultry cooking. And the Bureau of Home Economics will see to it that you get a copy of this folder with one page giving complete directions on how to broil chicken.... squab, ... duckling or even young turkey, which certainly must be something very super.

